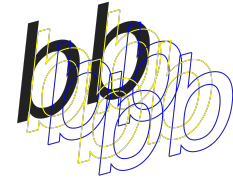


Playroom

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November 21, 2015, 7-10 PM
Open Saturdays, 1-5 PM through December 12

The mass implementation of specially-designed screws to keep the public out of public space measures the magnitude of capital invested, not in providing a better fastener for urban environments but rather, intent on whispering to its users, the public, "no, you may not." Despite the high availability of these specialized drivers, it is uncommon to see missing hardware from public spaces like restrooms and public transportation. It seems the collective response to "no, you may not" is received and internalized as "no, I cannot." This message—confronted subconsciously on a daily basis—deals a blow to personal agency and the ability to act openly and freely in public space.

The installation considers the impact infrastructure of institutions, such as a daycare center, have on many citizens from the moment they first join and assimilate into contemporary society. Such places may host the instances where young people first hear the phrases "*share with others*," "*use your words*," or "*use your inside voice*." The places where social indoctrinations are taught are also where individuals learn to limit their personal agency for the benefit of the group. The works include puzzle-like objects placed low to or on the ground to invite visitors to question what is being learned. A grim series of interlocking foam floor tiles regard the phenomenon of children playing on the ground. The tiles are contoured such that they offer many options of joining together to make up a whole. Upon further inspection the tiles do not carry the alphabet in soft, rounded lettering, but the word "no" in stark, sans serif type. In contrast, within a sort of dollhouse are found a number of banal miniatures—plumbing fixtures, partitions, and mirrors. If the visitor were to look carefully they would discover none of the objects are joined to the walls, suggesting their placement to be chosen by whoever decides to play "house." Toilets may join side by side, and sinks may become fountains. There is no proper solution to this puzzle, only the realization that floor plans can be arbitrary. Throughout the perimeter of the space, the conventional screws holding every outlet and light switch faceplate to the wall have been replaced with tamper-proof screws bearing a smile. Detailed plans to build these screws are offered freely, defaced but not obscured by crayon. With this drawing, the number of smiling screws found within the space builds up to a chorus that encourages the viewer to consider those choices self-assigned, and limited by a larger body.

-A.G.